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NEWS RELEASE

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WILDERNESS SCIENCE CONFERENCE EXPLORES NEW CHALLENGES

MISSOULA--

Scientists, philosophers and land managers interested in the relationship between humans and wilderness will convene for a May 23-27 conference in Missoula to explore changes and challenges in wilderness science.

Titled "Wilderness Science in a Time of Change," the conference, co-organized by The University of Montana, is designed to capture the current state of knowledge and help prepare for the future.

Registration will open at 3 p.m. Sunday, May 23, at the Holiday Inn Parkside. Sessions on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday will begin with registration at 7 a.m. and continue with sessions from 8 a.m. to noon and 1:30 to 5 p.m.

To kick off the conference on Sunday, Gary Snyder of the University of California at Davis will give the keynote address starting at 6:30 p.m. in the Wilma Theatre. A free, public reception at Caras Park, complete with entertainment by the Cocinada Latin Jazz Ensemble, will follow Snyder's talk.

Monday's highlights include opening sessions on global trends -- environmental, social and technological -- with speakers Peter Vitousek of Stanford University and George Stankey

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of the U.S. Forest Service. Tuesday's program will get under way with Baird Callicott of the University of North Texas and Dave Foreman, director of the New Mexico Wilderness Alliance, discussing "Contemporary Criticism of the Traditional Idea of Wilderness."

In Wednesday's opening sessions Jill Belsky, a UM associate professor of sociology, will discuss "Changing Human Relationships With Nature." Daniel Botkin of the University of California at Santa Barbara will present "Wilderness As a Biological Refugium."

Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday afternoons will be devoted to research and dialogue sessions. Wrap-up sessions on Thursday will run from 8 a.m. to noon and 1:30 to 3:30 p.m.

Conference organizers are UM's School of Forestry and Center for Continuing Education and the Arthur Carhart National Wilderness Training Center, Aldo Leopold Wilderness Research Institute and U.S. Forest Service.

The registration fee is \$225 for the general public and \$100 for students. Pre-registration closes May 7, but on-site registration will be available if space permits. Registration materials are available by contacting Christine Ross at (406) 243-4623 or e-mail nrm@selway.umt.edu, or by visiting <http://www.umt.edu/wildscience>. The full conference agenda is available at the Web site.

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